

Illegal Methamphetamine Labs

Information for Health Care Providers

The methods and chemicals used to produce methamphetamine are highly variable. There are three basic categories of chemicals found at illegal methamphetamine labs in Minnesota: (1) solvents, (2) corrosives/irritants, and (3) metals/salts. Specific chemicals commonly found at illegal labs and some of their possible health effects and their target organs are listed below.

- (1) **Solvents:** **acetone, ether, freon, hexane, methanol, toluene, trichloroethane, white gas, xylene**
- Symptoms: irritation to skin, eyes, nose and throat; headache; dizziness; central nervous system depressant/depression; nausea; vomiting; visual disturbance
- Target Organs: eyes, skin, respiratory system, central nervous system, liver, kidneys
- (2) **Corrosives/Irritants:** **anhydrous ammonia, hydrochloric acid, phosphine, sodium hydroxide (lye), sodium thiosulfate, sulfuric acid (drain cleaner)**
- Symptoms: irritation to upper respiratory tract; cough; eye and skin irritation, inflammation and burns; gastrointestinal disturbances; thirst; chest tightness; dyspnea; muscle pain; syncope; convulsions
- Target Organs: eyes, skin, respiratory tract
- (3) **Metals/Salts:** **iodine, lithium metal, red phosphorus, yellow phosphorus, sodium metal**
- Symptoms: irritation to eyes, skin, nose and respiratory tract; lacrimation; headache; chest tightness; cutaneous hypersensitivity; abdominal pain; jaundice
- Target Organs: eyes, skin, respiratory system, central nervous system, liver, kidneys, blood, cardiovascular system

Substance-specific toxicological information and treatment procedures are available 24 hours a day from the **Minnesota Poison Control System at 1-800-222-1222.**

A detailed list of the chemicals found at a methamphetamine lab site should be available from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA),



Factsheets and other information on meth lab-related topics from many Minnesota agencies can be found at the Minnesota Meth Labs Website at: <http://www.dem.state.mn.us/methlab/>.

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